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Italy's PM to resign! Berlusconi loses crucial majority in parliament

ROME (AFP) - Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi will resign once key reforms are adopted later this month, an official said Tuesday after a parliament vote sounded the death knell for his centre-right coalition.

"Once this commitment has been carried out, the prime minister will submit his resignation to the head of state," read a statement from President Giorgio Napolitano's office after consulta-



tions between the president and Berlusconi.

Napolitano's office said Berlusconi had shown "his awareness of the implications of the results of today's vote" as well as "concern for the urgent need to give prompt answers to the expectations of European partners," it said.

The announcement came after Berlusconi's centre-right coalition was hit by a rash of defections and lost its overall majority in parliament on a key vote amid pressure for Italy to move quickly to put its public finances in order.

A vote on Italy's 2010 public accounts -- a precondition for the approval of future budgets -- was passed by 308 votes in favour, none against with one formal abstention and 321 deputies who did not

take part in the vote.

The overall majority in Italy's 630-seat parliament is 316 votes.

A scathing Berlusconi spoke bitterly of betrayal as he stormed out of parliament, according to newspaper reports. Eight deputies who refused to support him were labelled "traitors" in a scribbled note captured on camera.

The EU's Economic Affairs Commissioner Olli Rehn said the situation in Italy was "very worrisome" and said it was under "very significant" market pressure.

Italy has promised reforms including a sell-off of state assets and an overhaul of the labour market in a law to be adopted by the end of the month.

Borrowing rates hit new records after the vote on investor fears, with the yield on 10-year bonds reaching 6.77 percent and the spread between Italian and German benchmark bond yields widening to a new high of nearly 5.0 percent.

"The government no longer has a majority in this chamber," Pier Luigi Bersani, leader of the main opposition Democratic Party, said after the vote.

Continue on pg 2

Tonight: 2nd Pink Runway at the Westin Aruba



Aruba concludes Breast Cancer Awareness Month events with the grand finale, the 2nd Pink Runway, tonight at the Westin Aruba Resort beginning at 8:00 p.m. Entrance fee is \$20 or 35 Aruban florins; all the models are breast cancer survivors and all proceeds help the Mary Joan Foundation in their important work. The Mary Joan Foundation volunteers, many of them breast cancer survivors, are active in organizing events and raising funds to help victims and their families with counseling and practical assistance. A few years ago they organized with Ateliers '89 Art Center the first Bra Art exposition, which traveled to Curacao. Images of the creative works produced by that first effort were incorporated into an attractive birthday calendar and 2011 agenda, both of which were sold to raise funds for the foundation. A number of the bras were finally sold to collectors to also help the foundation.

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Italy's PM to resign!

Continued from pg 1

(AFP) -- "We all know that Italy runs the risk over the next few days of not having access to commercial debt markets," he said.

The premier's main coalition partner had called for his resignation ahead of the vote, with a nervous Europe watching on as political consultations also continued in crisis-hit Greece over the formation of a new cabinet.

"We have asked him to step aside," Northern League party leader Umberto Bossi, a long-term ally of Berlusconi from the early 1990s, told reporters.

Global markets were focused on the political crisis playing out in Italy, the third-biggest economy in the euro-zone, while European Union ministers held talks in Brussels in which they voiced concern about the situation.

The euro rose to \$1.3830 after the announcement of Berlusconi's resignation from \$1.3787 earlier.

The combination of Italy's low growth rate and 1.9-trillion euro (\$2.6-trillion) debt has fanned investor alarm that it could be the next victim of Europe's debt crisis even though its deficit is relatively low.

Among the possible political scenarios mooted in re-

cent days are early elections, a national unity government, a government led by technocrats and a widening of the current coalition to include the centrist UDC party.

Berlusconi's popularity rating has slumped to a record low of 22 percent amid the current crisis and he is currently a defendant in three trials for bribery, tax fraud, abuse of power and paying for sex with a 17-year-old girl.

Italy has been on the ropes since last week when the government agreed to special surveillance from the International Monetary Fund and the European Union to ensure it was meeting crucial targets to cut its massive debt.

The first EU experts are set to begin work in Italy on Wednesday.

Greece's two main parties meanwhile were tantalisingly close to a breakthrough on naming a new government and outgoing Prime Minister George Papandreou demanded the resignation of his ministers to ease the process.

Khoon Goh, strategist at ANZ bank in Wellington told Dow Jones Newswires: "Greece may still be hogging the headlines at present, but we could be moving from a Greek crisis towards an Italian crisis."

Catch of The Day!



SOMALIA, Mogadishu : A Somali fisherman carries his catch near the port of Mogadishu on the Indian Ocean coast along Hamarweyne district, in Mogadishu, Somalia November, 8, 2011. AFP PHOTO

Be Alert!



Announcement by the Special Projects Team (Atraco Team) of the Aruba Police Force

ORANJESTAD – The end of the year 2011 is near and with it comes all the yearend festivities.

The Aruba Police Force encourages everyone to be cautious with their homes and belongings during these days. Here follows some useful tips:

HOW DO MOST ARMED ROBBERIES TAKE PLACE?

Between 6 PM and 6 AM (dark hours).
Either at opening time or near closing.

Most armed robberies will be done by one or two males.

Their weapon of preference will be a small handgun (revolver or pistol).

It is happening more and more though that armed robbers are using a knife or other form of club-like weapons to commit robberies since guns are not always affordable to some criminals.

WHAT ARE ARMED ROBBERS LOOKING FOR?

Most of the time they will be looking for businesses that are:

1. isolated,
2. dark,
3. Not much movement around the place,
4. Places where they are most likely to find fair or large amounts of cash money (for instance lottery booths or office buildings, supermarkets, small stores, etc., which are open until late)
5. least amount of employees, preferably only one
6. no cameras,
7. no alarms,
8. different escape routes for a quick get-away,
9. No security guards
10. Police don't patrol the area a lot.



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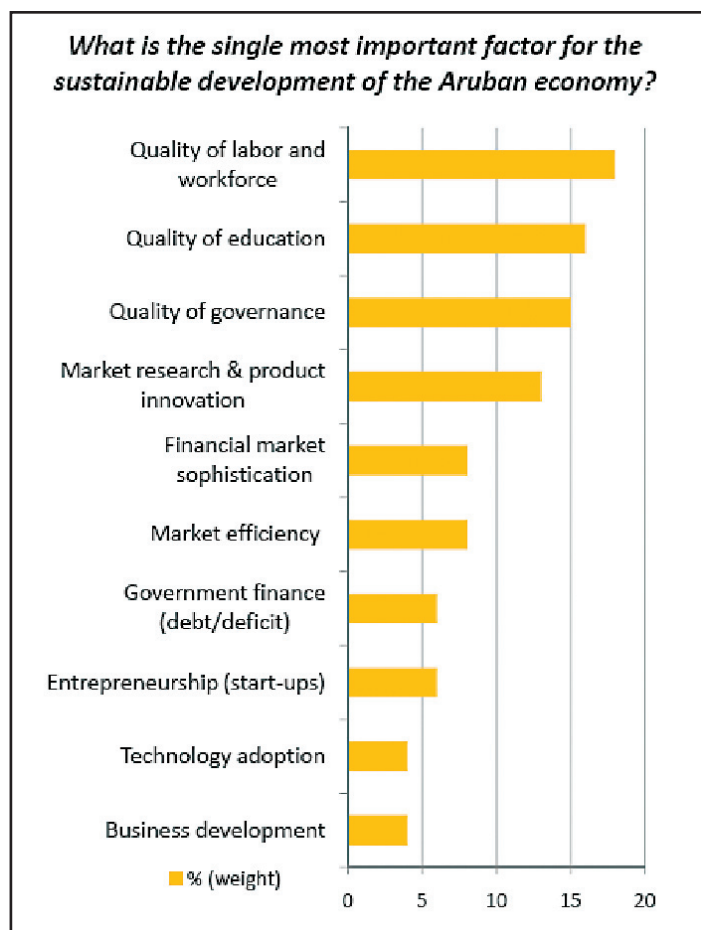
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NCIC study reveals: Quality of labor and education key factors for sustainable economic development



What is the most important driver for the sustainable development of Aruba's econ-

omy and industries?

This question was recently polled by the National Coun-

cil for Innovation & Competitiveness (NCIC) and the University of Aruba (UA). Using an on-line poll, over 500 businesses were approached to answer the question what they thought was the single most important factor for the sustainable development of Aruba's business community.

Out of fifteen different factors, the results of the poll indicate that the top three factors are: the quality of the labor market (18%), the quality of education (16%), and the quality of governance (15%). Other factors that were also mentioned include research & development (13%), financial market sophistication (8%), market efficiency (8%), government finance (6%), entrepreneurship (6%), technology innovation (4%), and business development (4%).

Cumulatively, the top-ranked factors weigh in at almost 50%, and suggest a clear emphasis on the need to improve productivity, develop human capital, professionalize the workforce, and harness talent. While the re-

sults are not entirely surprising, as these areas have been stagnant for over a decade, the shift towards a new economy based on (international) trade and (green) technology, does require an increasingly more urgent re-strategizing and re-design of our labor and educational systems.

In addition, the need for strong institutions and quality governance is equally underscored. According to the poll, institutions need to be

strengthened in terms of responsibility and accountability, rule of law, regulatory quality, efficiency and equity, competence and credibility, independence and trust, and transparency and stability. Without a strong foundation, sustainability remains a phantom.

The NCIC and UA would like to thank all respondents for their valuable time and insight.



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Hans Klok, Dutch Magician visits Magic Live! show



....World Famous, celebrity dutch magician, Hans Klok, visits the cast & crew of the Magic Live!® show, starring Adam Steinfeld, at the Westin Resort in Aruba, Monday night, says Hans Klok, "...that's THE BEST performance of Clearly, Seeing a Women-in-half, I've ever seen!" SEE IT LIVE! you Won't Believe Your Eyes, only at the Westin Resort, Aruba, 9pm nightly, tickets available at the door, more info at: www.WestinAruba.com/magic. PHOTO (from left to right), magician/comedian, Adam Steinfeld, Julieta, dutch magician, Hans Klok, Perlita and Flor

New Labor Laws to be enacted come 2012... over 100 of them!

During last week's government press conference, one of the items on the agenda was the new labor laws poised to take effect at the start of the new year...2012.

According to the Minister of Labor, Otmar Oduber, there are some 5 labor law decrees, 3 of which with adaptations and 2 brand new laws to be enacted. These laws, reportedly, have been formulated during three-partite discussions with employers and representatives of employees. It was a long and tedious 9 months process says Oduber.

According to Minister Oduber, after complying with all the requirements for getting these laws approved, the final step was to get formal feedback from the Council of Advice so that they can be passed by Parliament and be made into law. It is expected that they will be ready for implementation during the first months of 2012.

One of the issues addressed in the new laws is that of the situation with the Temporary Employment Agencies (Uitzendbureaus). Oduber claims that there is a new law dealing with these institutions. They will no longer be able to do what they want, but

that there will be strict controls and regimentation regarding their operations. The new laws will protect employee from abuses taking place with this type of phenomena.

The system of having an employee as a temporary worker for the same company for longer than 1 year, who

should have long become a permanent employee will disappear.

Said type of abuse will be a thing of the past under the new laws. The same applies to the Hospitality industry with respect to waiters, cashiers, bartenders, etc. who are given "on call" work arrangements at the whim of

the employers. That situation too will be a matter of the past.

Along with the introduction of these new laws, the Department of Labor will also be granted authority to issue hefty fines for infringement of any of these laws. The penalties could reach as high as 143 thousand florins for non-com-

pliance with any of the laws.

The Aruban community can brase itself for some very practical, modernized labor laws designed specifically to protect and benefit the employee, but at the same time to guarantee that employers are assured of fair and just treatment.

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Gerrit Rietveld Academy off to great start



On opening day, Minister of Culture and Economic Affairs, Michelle Winklaar, presented the director of the prestigious Gerrit Rietveld Academy with a symbolic gift as a token of the government's pleasure to have this institution established here on our shores.

The building in which the institution is housed, although temporary, was named "The Elephant." Here they began offering their courses with much enthusiasm and dedication. As was agreed in Amsterdam at

the mother institution, the start date was to be November second, and despite the odds, they succeeded in opening on this date.

Aruba is the very first country outside of Holland where this world-renowned institution is established.

Last year Minister Michelle Winklaar-Hooyboer paid the institution a visit in Amsterdam and was able to personally witness their program, speak to teachers and students and experience something of the way the school functions. While there



she also spoke to Robin de Vogel, an Aruban student at the institute. Remarkable is that 50% of the students are international students hailing from various countries.

This proves that the interest from the cultural-artistic world is great and that Aruba would be able to attract students for a bachelor's degree from the region and from South America. Most likely, American students would also be interested in pursuing an art education here in Aruba.

The government of Aruba is placing much emphasis on the so-called "Creative Industries." The establishment of the Gerrit Rietveld Academy is an example of this direction of the government. The upcoming "Bienale di Arte" and the construction of the Museum of Art in 2012 is also a part the government's quest for developing the "Creative Industries."

The Gerrit Rietveld Academy is a well known name in Aruba, as many of our tal-

ented artists have studied at this institution in the Netherlands. They see the establishment of this institution here as new opportunities for them to, perhaps, teach or to send students to study here rather than to going all the way to Holland.

On opening day, Minister Winklaar-Hooyboer presented Gerrit Rietveld with a colorful and artistic wall poster designed by Joshua Ras, a young designer at Tera Group N.V.

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UN Council deadlocked on Palestinian bid: report

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - The UN Security Council is deadlocked on whether to accept or reject Palestine as a member of the United Nations, according to a draft report of a key committee obtained Tuesday.

"The committee was unable to make a unanimous recommendation to the Security Council," said the report by the committee on admitting new UN members, adding to the troubles faced by the Palestinian application made by president Mahmud Abbas on September 23.

The United States has vowed to block any approval given by the 15-member Security Council but its mem-

bership committee still has to consider the bid.

The draft report, obtained by AFP, avoids saying which countries supported or opposed the bid and whether there was a majority in favor or against. It said simply that "differing views were expressed".

The Palestinians have heralded their success in joining UNESCO where a majority vote of the agency's main conference accepted membership.

The route to full UN acceptance is packed with obstacles however.

The membership committee will meet on Friday when it must decide what action to take on the Palestinian demand. The

report could be changed.

Brazil, China, India, Lebanon, Russia and South Africa have publicly backed the Palestinian case. Nigeria and Gabon have not indicated their vote but are expected to back the admission.

The United States has said it will veto and Britain, Colombia and France announced at a meeting of the committee last week that they would abstain.

Germany has not yet announced its stance, but is expected to abstain or vote no, diplomats said. Portugal and Bosnia are expected to abstain.

Council members are now waiting for the Palestinians to indicate whether they want a full vote on the Security Council. Normally this will be made through Lebanon as the current Arab member of the body.

"The opinion of the committee does not cancel our right to go to the UN Security Council but we will not take any decision before the publication of the report" on Friday, Saeb Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, told AFP.

The Palestinian leadership will decide the next step after consulting with Arab allies, he said.

"But it is doomed to failure so whether they make the call depends on whether they want a hard landing or a soft landing," one western diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

The United States and Israel oppose Palestinian membership of the UN because they say there must be direct Palestinian-Israeli talks on setting up a new state.

The Palestinians could still decide to go to the UN General Assembly and seek a vote on a form of super observer status. France has strongly urged the Palestinians to seek this path.

Toll climbs in deadly Colombia mudslide

MANIZALES (AFP) - Searchers on Tuesday recovered more bodies from the debris of a massive weekend mudslide here, raising the death toll to 44, authorities.

The mudslide in Manizales, a city of 350,000 some 287 kilometers (178 miles) west of Bogota, swept through the Cervantes neighborhood early Saturday, demolishing as many as 14 houses.

The bodies of two people were found during the course of the morning, said Sandra Calvo, a spokeswoman for Colombia's Risk Manage-

ment Office.

"We still estimate that 11 people are missing," she said.

Rescue work was briefly interrupted Tuesday morning due to rainfall.

Scores of Colombians were still awaiting news of loved ones buried since Saturday, as the likelihood of finding more survivors diminished by the hour.

State weather monitors warn that the heavy rain that has been soaking Colombia since September will last through the first months of 2012 due to the cyclical La Nina weather phenomenon.

Guatemala captures alleged drug lord wanted in US

GUATEMALA CITY (AFP) - Guatemala's Interior Minister announced Tuesday the arrest of Elio Lorenzana, an alleged drug lord wanted on trafficking charges in the United States.

Lorenzana is the son of Waldemar Lorenzana, 71, known as "El Patriarca" (The Patriarch) and arrested in April on US drug trafficking charges.

The US Treasury Department was offering a \$200,000 bounty for Elio Lorenzana's arrest.

The Lorenzana family owns 15 businesses in eastern Guatemala, including gasoline stations and companies involved in construction, transportation and fruit ex-

ports.

US officials accuse the elder Lorenzana of having links with two notorious Mexican drug lords, Ismael Zambada Garcia and Joaquin 'El Chapo' (Shorty) Guzman, both top members of the dangerous Sinaloa Cartel.

Elio Lorenzana, "like his father, is accused of the crime of conspiracy to international drug trafficking" and is wanted by a US federal court, said Prosecutor General Claudia Paz.

Central America has become a staging ground for illegal narcotics, especially cocaine coming from South America and making its way north to the lucrative US market.



COLOMBIA, Bogotá : Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos (R) shakes hands with his Ecuadorean counterpart Rafael Correa during the welcoming ceremony at Narino Presidential Palace in Bogota, yesterday. Correa attends a special meeting of the Andean Presidential Council of the Community of Andean Nations (CAN) with their counterparts from Bolivia, Evo Morales, Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos and Peru, Ollanta Humala. The summit was convened before the Ecuadorean government announced its departure from the CAN due to differences with Colombia. (AFP PHOTO)

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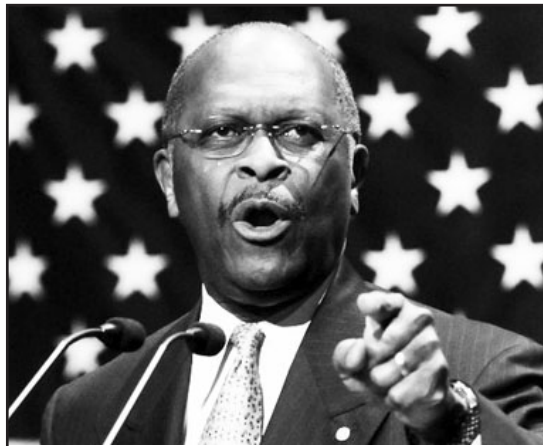
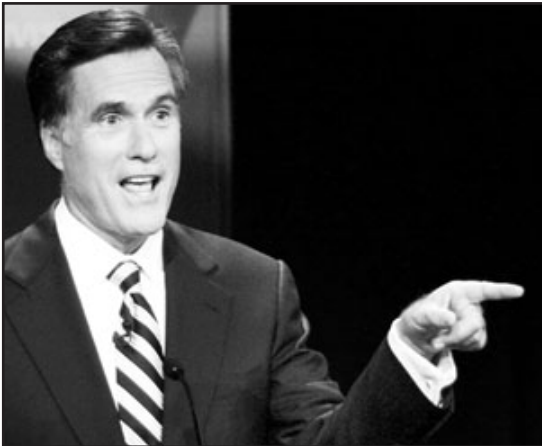
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International News

Romney, Cain still even in Republican race: poll



Romney (L), Cain (R)

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A new poll shows presidential frontrunners Mitt Romney and Herman Cain still in a statistical tie, although the survey was taken before an explosive press conference at which a new accuser said the former pizza executive groped her.

The survey Tuesday by the Wall Street Journal and NBC television found that 28 percent of registered voters planning to vote in the Republican primary supported Romney, while 27 percent said they favored Cain.

The Georgia businessman -- already fending off a string of sex harassment claims -- faced new allegations Monday from the only one of his alleged victims willing so far to come out publicly.

At a packed New York press conference, Sharon Bialek accused Cain of groping her while she met with him in 1997 hoping he would help her find a job.

Bialek is the fourth woman in little more than a week to level charges of sexual impropriety against Cain, although none of the others would come forward with their claims.

While the poll did not take public reaction to Bialek's claim into account, it was taken amid the weeklong furor surrounding the African-American businessman and Baptist minister in relation to the three other sexual harassment charges.

Cain for his part, has dismissed all of the allegations, and counter punched that Bialek is motivated by a desire for financial gain.

Known for his booming voice and easy smile, the African American businessman, who turns 66 next month, has been far less affable in the past 10 days, as he faced the glare of the media responding to the charges.

After lagging for months in the polls after formally launching his bid for the US presidency in March, Cain surged to the top of the Republican field several weeks ago and has remained there despite the scandal.

His supporters have been seduced by his charisma and sunny optimism. He also won admiration for his inspirational tale of triumph over cancer and an up-by-the-bootstraps rise from poverty in the segregated South.

Cain was born in Memphis, Tennessee and raised in Atlanta, Georgia by a domestic worker mother and chauffeur father.

He describes his life as a classic American Dream story, climbing from the depths of poverty to attain riches and professional success.

Meanwhile, Romney -- like Cain a successful businessman before entering politics -- has been tipped by many experts to be the likely eventual Republican nominee.

So far, however, Romney has failed to excite conservative voters who form a decisive bloc of the Republican base.

His poll numbers for weeks have been stuck in the mid-to-high 20s, with little indication that a broader cross-section of the Republican electorate is willing to give him their support.

The NBC/Wall Street Journal poll of 1,000 adults found that former House speaker Newt Gingrich, now with 13 percent support, has slipped ahead of Congressman Ron Paul and Texas Governor Rick Perry, each of whom garnered 10 percent.

US appeals panel upholds Obama health care law

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A US appeals court panel Tuesday upheld the constitutionality of President Barack Obama's landmark health care overhaul, in the latest legal challenge to the law which is expected to end up at the Supreme Court.

The three-judge panel in Washington, in a 2-1 decision, said the most controversial element of the law -- mandating that people buy health insurance or face a tax -- was not a violation of individual rights.

But the case is among several working through the court system in various states, suggesting the US Supreme Court will have to

decide on the constitutionality of the law, which Obama has hailed as a key achievement but which conservatives claim oversteps his authority.

The White House welcomed the news, saying in a statement: "The ruling is yet another victory for the millions of Americans who are already benefiting from the law, including the parents of children with preexisting conditions, women getting mammograms with no out-of-pocket cost, seniors saving hundreds of dollars on their prescription drugs, and one million young adults now newly insured through their parent's plan."

US embryo vote highlights abortion ahead of 2012 polls

MIAMI (AFP) - Mississippi residents voted Tuesday on whether to amend the state constitution to declare a fertilized human egg a person, a move likely to re-ignite the bitter abortion debate ahead of the 2012 elections.

The so-called "personhood amendment," which would grant rights to an embryo from the moment of conception, is similar to a measure rejected twice by voters in Colorado state.

But in conservative Mississippi the measure has support from Republican Phil Bryant and Democrat Johnny DuPree, the two main candidates running for governor who are also on the ballot Tuesday.

The measure could be approved or rejected by a narrow margin: 45 percent of Mississippi voters support the amendment, while 44 percent oppose it, according to a Public Policy Polling survey out Monday carried on the Politico website.

The remaining 11 percent was undecided.

If approved, embryos in the Bible Belt state will be considered people with all the rights and protections that go along with the designation.

It would also mean that abortion would be against the law -- even in the case of rape and incest -- and other birth control methods could possibly be made illegal as well.



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Sexual assistants - the stigma of helping disabled Swiss



ZURICH (AFP) - For several years now, Jacques Arnould has been giving disabled people in Switzerland the right to a little tenderness and sexual attention.

But for many, his work as a professional "sexual assistant" treads a thin line between a caring profession and prostitution.

Aged 50 and married with three children, Jacques is one of the rare Swiss assistants to openly speak out about the services he provides. Even in Switzerland, where the job of sexual assistant has had a proper legal status for more than eight years, the subject remains taboo.

A qualified physiotherapist, with a speciality in urinary and gynaecological issues, Jacques says there is "still a lot of educating to do on this subject" of sexual assistance for the handicapped, which is often misunderstood.

"Disabled people are still people: they have fantasies, expectations, desires and frustrations," he said.

The job of the sexual assistant is to respond to these needs and give people who might otherwise have little chance of being sexually active due to their handicap the opportunity to feel like a normal human being.

Some sexual assistants show a disabled client how to touch and be touched, others bring the person to orgasm. There is usually a lengthy assessment of what a person's needs are and what he can actually physically achieve with his disability before anything physical takes place.

Across town, far away from Zurich's red light districts, Michelle Gut, an elegant masseuse with long blonde hair, greets clients -- many of whom are mentally or physically disabled -- at her chic and comfortable Andana massage parlour. A masseuse since the 1990s, Michelle went on to qualify for legal status as a

sexual assistant to give disabled clients "the sexual tenderness they are missing".

"It is not easy to have a normal private life when you are handicapped," she said. "Some people just use pornography, others don't know anything about sexuality at all as they have no experience of it."

Only around a dozen people in Switzerland are trained to give this experience. The training is handled by specialist organisations after a rigorous selection process. One of the requirements stipulates that working as an assistant must not be someone's main job, but rather a secondary line of work.

"It is not a profession in itself, you even have to prove that you have a main profession," explained Catherine Aghte Diserens, a sex educator who trains sexual assistants. She is also president of the Swiss Sexuality and Handicap charity SEHP, which encourages people with disabilities to be sexually active.

- Assistance, not prostitution -

Sexual assistants can also be found in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark but in other countries, such as France, the job does not yet have a proper legal status.

In Switzerland, a sexual assistant has a status similar to that of a prostitute, rather than a carer, since services are paid for and the cost is met entirely by the client.

Michelle charges 162 euros (\$222) an hour for the disabled and 220 euros for able-bodied clients, and offers services ranging from classic massage to "erogenous zone massage", which equates to masturbation, she said.

Penetration is not allowed though, she added adamantly. "I have some good contacts who are prostitutes and I know some sexual assistants who will go further so if a client wants more, I put them in touch."

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Floods show what lies ahead for sinking Bangkok



BANGKOK (AFP) - The Thai capital, built on swampland, is slowly sinking and the floods currently besieging Bangkok could be merely a foretaste of a grim future as climate change makes its impact felt, experts say.

The low-lying metropolis lies just 30 kilometres (18 miles) north of the Gulf of Thailand, where various experts forecast sea level will rise by 19 to 29 centimetres (7 to 11 inches) by 2050 as a result of global warming.

Water levels would also increase in Bangkok's main Chao Phraya river, which already overflows regularly.

If no action is taken to protect the city, "in 50 years... most of Bangkok will be below sea level," said Anond Snidvongs, a climate change expert at the capital's Chulalongkorn University.

But global warming is not the only threat. The capital's gradual sinking has also been blamed on years of aggressive groundwater extraction to meet the growing needs of the city's factories and its 12 million inhabitants.

As a result Bangkok was sinking by 10 centimetres a

year in the late 1970s, according to a study published last year by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

That rate has since dropped to less than one centimetre annually, they said, thanks to government measures to control groundwater pumping.

If those efforts continued, the report authors said, they hoped the subsidence rate could slow by another 10 per cent each year.

But Anond disputed their projections, saying Bangkok was still sinking at "an alarming rate" of one to three centimetres per year.

While scientists may argue over the exact figures, they agree about what lies in store for the sprawling megacity.

Faced with the combined threats of land subsidence and rising temperatures and sea levels, the World Bank has predicted that Bangkok's flood risk will increase four-fold from now by 2050.

And the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has classified the Thai capital among the 10

cities in the world facing the biggest potential impact from coastal flooding by 2070.

For now, Bangkok is relying on a complex system of dykes, canals, locks and pumping stations to keep the rising waters at bay.

The flood protection efforts, however, failed to prevent an onslaught of run-off water from the north from swamping at least one-fifth of the capital.

The murky floodwaters, triggered by three months of heavy monsoon rains, are edging in on Bangkok's glitzy downtown area, threatening luxury hotels, office buildings and shopping malls.

Rapid urbanisation is one reason why the inundations are affecting the sprawling city so badly, according to experts.

As the area that needs flood protection gets larger and more built-up, the water "has fewer places to go", said Francois Molle, a water management expert at France's Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement.

Molle said that in the long term, Bangkok would eventually be under water. "The only question is when."

Experts say Thai authorities must address the capital's land use and planning challenges and consider relocating factories or industrial parks in flood-prone areas.

Or even moving the entire city.

It may sound like a drastic scenario, but there is little doubt that Bangkok will have to act if it wants to avoid the fate of the fabled sunken city of Atlantis.

India Internet users top 100 million



NEW DELHI (AFP) - India's Internet users have topped 100 million, a study said Tuesday, and its online population could overtake the United States' within two years.

India's Internet population stood at 112 million by September, making it the third-biggest globally after China and the United States, the Internet and Mobile Association of India said.

"It's good news that we've crossed the 100 million milestone, but it has taken us a long time to get here," association president Subho Ray told AFP. "Internet use in India now is entering a critical growth phase," he added.

India is adding 5 to 7 million Internet users every month, increasingly in small-town India and among the less wealthy.

At the current pace, the

country will overtake the United States in less than two years, the study projected.

China's online population is the world's largest at 485 million while the United States has around 245 million users.

The Indian government expects the number of Internet users in the country to total around 600 million in the next five years, Ray noted.

Internet giant Google said last week it expects India's Internet growth to be driven by mobile phone users, predicting they will form the majority of new online users in the country as low-priced smartphones become available.

As Internet usage has grown, online shopping has climbed sharply with retail chains and consumer goods companies jumping on the Web bandwagon to lure new customers.

According to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India, the online retail industry is expected to grow by 35 percent annually to touch 70 billion rupees (\$1.4 billion) by 2015, up from 20 billion rupees now.



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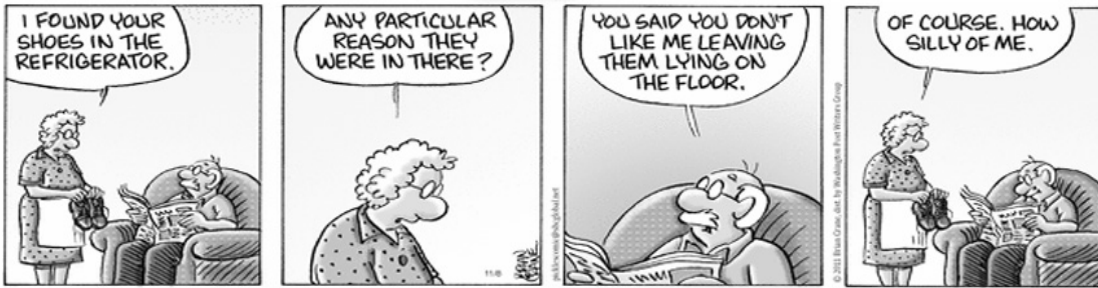


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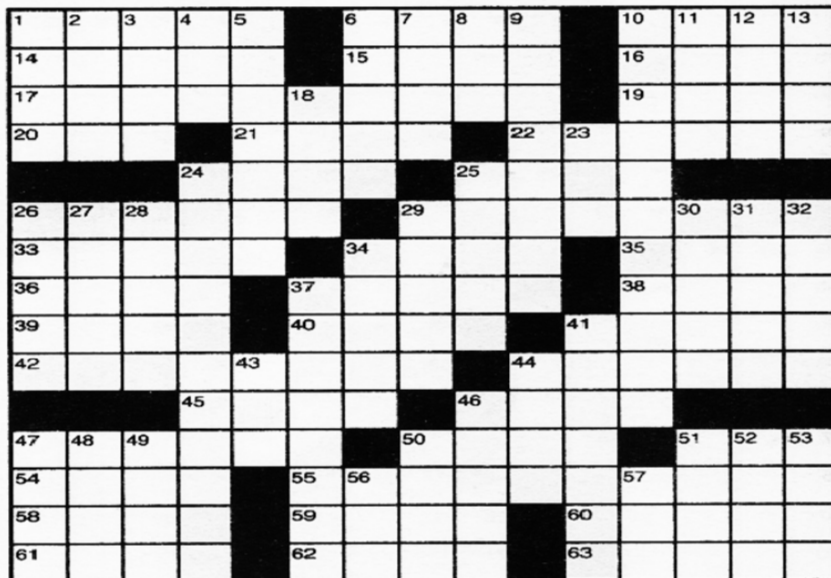
ALL WOUND UP

ACROSS

1. Hunt on private property
6. Indian of New Mexico
10. Foul-smelling
14. Elisha's grandfather
15. Algerian city
16. Winter Olympics vehicle
17. "Main" watch component
19. Windows symbol
20. "More matter, with less ____" ("Hamlet")
21. Vats
22. Change back
24. '50s nightclub, to habitués
25. Behind time
26. Whirlybird whirlers
29. Electrolyte-rich drink
33. Estrogen producer
34. Leeds's river
35. Cliffhanger setup
36. Put something on the line
37. Bucks
38. Corduroy feature
39. Suffixes for hydrocarbons
40. Wizard's hat, e.g.
41. Book sold in "Paper Moon"
42. Antonio of Venice, e.g.
44. Resists a nap
45. Incense
46. Fourth down option
47. Mother with a Nobel Prize
50. Shopper's place
51. Timor or Coral
54. Swear

DOWN

55. Certain garden ornaments
58. Duct
59. Talia Shire, to Nicolas Cage
60. Verboten things
61. Kane's "Rosebud"
62. Acquires
63. Business park pest
1. South American rodent
2. Olfactory tip-off
3. Came back to earth
4. Stanford's rival, for short
5. What happened
6. Casey's
7. "Mila 18" author Leon
8. A Bobbsey Twin
9. Thankless people
10. "More" requester
11. "Time" founder
12. Composer Stravinsky
13. Slight hollow
18. Little labs
23. WWII command
24. Moved in a spiral
25. Sweater size
26. "Air Music" composer
27. Flock description
28. Electroshock weapon
29. Bonemeal bread baker?
30. Lawrence's troops
31. Beatrice of "Clean"
32. Rapiers with three-sided blades
34. Seek penance
37. Carpetbagger's counterpart
41. Fabric for a flag
43. That chap's
44. Fold a sail
46. Pieces
47. Light knocks
48. Sin
49. Rustler's aid
50. Ton of money
51. ____-Tibetan
52. Boasters have big ones
53. Cape fox
56. Shade
57. Moo ____ gai pan

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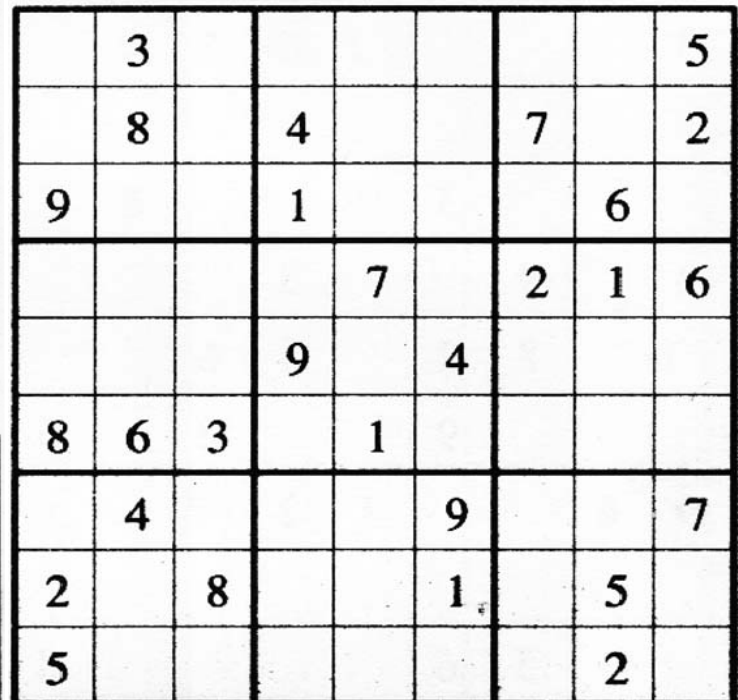
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

1	2	7	8	9	6	5	4	3
6	5	8	1	7	9	4	2	3
4	8	9	6	2	5	1	7	3
7	1	6	5	1	7	8	9	4
8	5	7	9	6	2	1	4	3
9	1	2	8	4	6	5	3	7
5	9	8	1	5	1	7	2	6
2	6	1	9	8	7	4	3	5
3	7	1	2	6	8	4	9	5

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance

Rio plans protest over loss of oil royalty revenues

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Rio State authorities are calling for a demonstration Thursday to protest legislation that would mean the loss of revenues from oil royalties estimated at \$29 billion (22 billion euros) and could affect the 2016 summer Olympics.

Since Monday, huge posters proclaiming "Against injustice: For the defense of Rio" have been plastered in some 20 strategic locations across this top tourist destination, including the famed Sugar Loaf Mountain, and the Christ the Redeemer statue.

"We hope to draw more than 100,000 people Thursday. This will be a demonstration of unity by the people of Rio in defense of their rights," said Rio State Governor Sergio Cabral in remarks carried Tuesday by the daily O Dia.

Rio de Janeiro is Brazil's main oil-producing area and has until now enjoyed the lion's share of royalties.

The royalties bring in more than four billion dollars a year to 89 of Rio State's 92 municipalities.

But an amendment approved in the lower house of Congress would distribute proceeds from the royalties more equally among all of Brazil's states, to the detriment of oil-producing states.

Wall St. executives bonuses to fall 30%



NEW YORK CITY --(AFP) -- Wall Street's banking and broking elite, under attack in the US for excessive pay, will see their end-of-year bonuses cut by up to 30 percent this year, according to a report released Tuesday.

Bonuses, which often top more than \$1 million for senior executives, will remain 25-35 percent below their peaks in 2007, when the country began to sink into financial crisis, according to the study by Johnson Associates.

"Lack of economic recovery, varying impact of regulation both globally and regionally, business mix, and ongoing uncertainty in world markets are key 2011 incentive drivers," the Johnson study said.

Johnson said senior management of the industry's

banks and fund managers would see their incentive pay fall by up to 30 percent from last year.

The cut for staffers would be up to 20 percent.

But not all will be hit, those in the headline-grabbing underwriting and mergers and acquisitions sectors will see bonuses jump by 5-10 percent.

Banks would be paying out a higher percentage of their income for bonuses, Johnson said, but that would be offset by declining profits this year.

Many have already announced layoffs, and Johnson says more layoffs could be ahead.

Bonuses are key to pay packages for many Wall Street executives.

Last year, for instance, JP-Morgan Chase chief executive James Dimon had a base salary of just \$1 million, but a cash bonus of \$5 million and stocks and options grants that took total pay to more than \$20 million, according to compensation specialists Equilar.

The Johnson study said that compensation models on Wall Street have been changing since the financial crisis, due in part to tougher regulations.

US stocks bounce higher on Berlusconi resignation

NEW YORK (AFP) - US stock markets scored robust gains Tuesday after the embattled Italian prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, said he would resign after austerity measures are approved.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 101.79 points (0.84 percent) to close at 12,170.18.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite rose 32.24 points (1.20 percent) to 2,727.49,

while the broader S&P 500 added 14.80 points (1.17 percent) to 1,275.92.

"The market likes the fact that Berlusconi is going to resign once the austerity package is approved," said Peter Cardillo at Rockwell Global Capital.

Fears have been rising that Italy, the eurozone's third-largest economy, would follow debt-strapped Greece to the brink of collapse.

Berlusconi -- a dominant feature in Italian politics for almost two decades -- had faced increasing calls for his resignation over the string of sex and corruption scandals as well as Italy's continued economic woes.

"It's not a character people have a lot of trust in, so they want to see him out of the picture," said Marc Pado at Cantor Fitzgerald.

Of the blue-chip Dow's 30 stocks, 27 finished in positive territory, notably the banks, which are sensitive to the European problems.

JPMorgan Chase added 2.2 percent and Bank of America gained 1.2 percent.

Fast-food giant McDonald's was among the rare Dow losers, slipping 0.02 percent after announcing a 5.5 percent rise in global sales in October.

Oil and gas explorer Pioneer Natural Resources lost 3.7 percent after it said it would offer 5.5 million shares for sale to raise new funds.

Online travel website Priceline jumped 8.6 percent after reporting earnings had doubled in the third quarter -- while warning that the current quarter would not meet earlier forecasts.

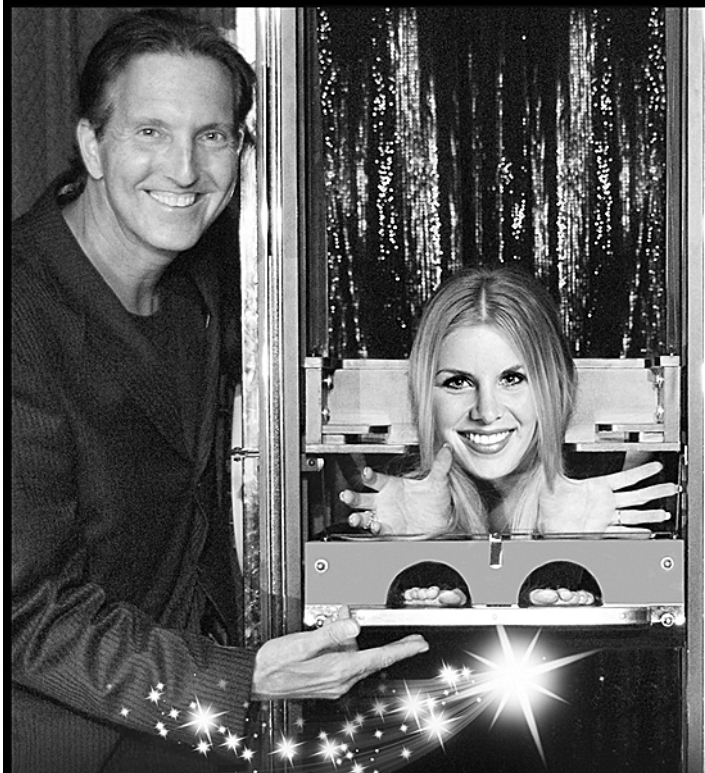
Bond prices tumbled. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.07 percent from 1.99 percent Monday, while that on the 30-year Treasury moved to 3.12 percent from 3.04 percent.

Bond yields and prices move in opposite directions.



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Brazil eyes more IMF clout via aid to debt-hit Europe

BRASILIA (AFP) - Keen to avoid the risks of direct aid to debt-ridden Europe, Brazil is offering to help by hiking its IMF contributions, a move that would give it more clout within the powerful institution, analysts say.

To help resolve the eurozone debt crisis, President Dilma Rousseff's government is considering a bigger commitment to the International Monetary Fund in a strategy coordinated with its partners in the BRICS group of emerging nations which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Finance Minister Guido

Mantega said Tuesday that no concrete commitments had been made at last week's G20 summit in southern France, and denied press reports that Brazil had offered to boost its IMF contribution by \$10 billion.

"We made no concrete proposal in terms of figures," he said, while hinting that this could change in the future.

Rousseff herself told the G20 summit that Brazil would not contribute to a European rescue fund, although it was open to boosting the IMF's resources to deal with the debt crisis.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

CARAT SAHA HERB
AYERS EVER AREA
RANCH LIVESTOCK
DHOTI EVE ISSUE
IRON RAD ERS
ELECTRICBILL
REX SATO REAMER
SNAG TEACH DIDO
TOMATO TOES LIT
MARGINALNOTE
MIA CSA ODIE
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Jackson family, fans hail doctor's conviction



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Fans rejoiced after Michael Jackson's doctor Conrad Murray was found guilty over the King of Pop's 2009 death, closing a trial that provided a troubling look at the star's demise.

Crowds of supporters out-

side erupted as the verdict was announced on Monday, while minutes later judge Michael Pastor ordered the 58-year-old medic handcuffed and remanded in custody, pending sentencing later this month.

Jackson's mother Katherine

cried and was hugged by one of his brothers after the jury convicted Murray of involuntary manslaughter for giving him an overdose of the anesthetic propofol on June 25, 2009.

"Justice was served," his brother Jermaine said as he and the rest of the family braved huge crowds to leave the building, while sister Rebbie added: "Nothing will bring him back, but I'm happy (Murray) was found guilty."

"VICTORY!!!!!!" tweeted La Toya. "We're Most Proud of The WALGREN team, U did a EXCELLENT JOB N UR quest 2 seek justice 4 Michael & my family," she added, referring to prosecutor David Walgren.

A grim-faced Murray gave no reaction when the verdict was announced and judge Pas-

tor ordered him held pending a sentencing hearing on November 29. The Los Angeles Times later reported that Murray had been placed on suicide watch.

Murray faces up to four years in jail for his role in Jackson's death, but there is speculation he could end up serving his sentence with an electronic tag because of California's chronic jail overcrowding.

He could also be banned from practicing medicine -- California has already suspended his medical license, while Nevada and Texas said they would consider similar action once the trial was over.

His defense lawyer Ed Chernoff declined to comment on whether Murray will appeal against the criminal conviction.

Outside the court vuvuzelas blared and fans danced to the

thudding groove of "Beat It" after the verdict was handed down.

LA local Lawrence Kolb was gathered with others around an iPad outside the courthouse, watching the verdict on live television. "Everyone just screamed," he said. "Everyone was jubilant."

Shortly before the verdict was announced, Jackson's former dermatologist broke his silence to deny the singer was a drug addict or that he had given him massive doses of painkillers in the months before his death.

Back at the courthouse, La Toya Jackson thanked fans who had gathered over the last six weeks, adding that her brother loved them -- and was watching over the trial.

"He was in that courtroom and that's why victory was served," she said.

Lindsay Lohan strips down for Playboy



LOS ANGELES - Actress Lindsay Lohan, who served hours behind bars Sunday for violating probation on drunken driving and theft charges, will appear in the pages of Playboy in its first issue of 2012, the men's magazine and Lohan's spokesman confirmed on Monday.

Speculation about a Playboy photo shoot has captured the media's attention in recent weeks as Lohan has struggled with her ongoing legal problems.

She has been in and out of legal trouble since a conviction in 2007 for drunk driving and drug use.

Just last week, a judge determined she had violated probation on those charges as well as a separate 2011 charge for stealing a necklace from a jewelry store. The judge sentenced

Lohan to 30 days in a Los Angeles jail.

In October, celebrity news outlet TMZ.com said Playboy offered Lohan \$750,000 to pose, but the actress wanted \$1 million. Playboy countered with a deal near that, TMZ said.

Lohan is having a hard time getting acting work due to her legal troubles, and so is focusing on fashion and photo shoots to keep the money coming in.

'Puss in Boots' has purrfect weekend in US, Canada



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Animated kids' romp "Puss in Boots" was purring plenty after pulling in \$33 million and holding onto the top spot at the North American box office at the weekend, industry data showed.

With the voice work of Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek,

Zach Galifianakis and Billy Bob Thornton, the flick took in \$33.04 million in three days adding up to a total take of \$75.5 million to date, monitor Exhibitor Relations reported.

"Tower Heist," with an all-star cast led by Eddie Murphy, had a strong opening in the number two spot with a \$25.08 million take in three days.

It was trailed by another solid premiere: "A Very Harold and Kumar 3D Christmas."

The comedy sequel brought in \$13.06 million on its first weekend out.

It knocked "Paranormal Activity 3" down to the number four spot with an \$8.5 million take, and now an impressive \$95.3 million overall haul.

Futuristic thriller "In Time"

starring Justin Timberlake and Amanda Seyfried edged down to fifth place, earning \$7.7 million in ticket sales between Friday and Sunday.

A remake of the hit 1980s dance romp "Footloose" slipped to the sixth spot, with a haul of \$4.55 million, putting it ahead of the boxing robots of "Real Steel" in seventh, with the Disney hit for children starring Hugh Jackman taking in \$3.4 million.

"The Rum Diary," starring Johnny Depp as a journalist facing an ethical conundrum in Puerto Rico, trailed in eighth place with \$2.99 million.

Political thriller "The Ides of March," starring George Clooney and Ryan Gosling, earned \$2.0 million in ninth place.

It was just ahead of "Moneyball," a sports drama starring Brad Pitt as a baseball coach, in the 10th spot, taking in \$1.9 million.

Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline

pick-up and drop-off; they even boast a shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spacious, offering privacy for

high-speed fiber-optic Internet connection, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are available for a modest fee. Concierge services to arrange



parents or a few couples. Beautifully appointed kitchens and bathrooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All homes come with cable TV,

rental cars, spa appointments, activities and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting on line at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: www.goldcoast-aruba.com to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.



Visit the Mario Hernandez shop for the finest....



Cashmir shawl with suede fringe and applique



casual wear, sturdy luggage and accessories

"It's all in the details," believes the owners of the Mario Hernandez shop in the Paseo Herencia Mall. "The fine handcraftsmanship and classic styling of the Mario Hernandez accessories have placed them in high demand around the world, and we are proud to have the only MH store on Aruba."

The cozy little shop can be found tucked away just across from The Cinemas ticket booth, featuring fine quality leather goods with a trendy touch, the best of the current Mario Hernandez designer collection. It also features a stylish selection of the designer's logo unisex shirts and stunning silk scarves. Our personal favorite was a cashmere shawl with MH 25th anniversary Chrysalis motif in suede appliques; the look and feel of it is simply gorgeous. Shawls and scarves perfectly combine with the buttery leather handbags and accessories for an ensemble fashion statement.

The Mario Hernandez collection encompasses luggage, handbags and wallets of every sort, with specialized functions. "Our men's accessories

are extremely popular; literally flying off the shelves," note the owners. In the two years since they opened their doors, they have found patrons are very impressed with the quality and style of the goods.

Just a short time ago, the design house created an extremely attractive new line featuring the art of William DeBilzan, noted American artist whose work is often seen adorning the chic homes of television characters; he has popular galleries in both Florida and California and his work is exhibited in over 28 galleries across the U.S. and Europe.

Mario Hernandez has been creating and designing products for over 30 years; his name is synonymous with manufacturing excellence and innovation in design. The store in Paseo Herencia Mall in Palm Beach is opened until 10:00 PM for convenient night-time shopping and boasts the latest collection of these timelessly styled accessories, each of them handcrafted at the Bogotá factory.

by Rosalie Klein

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FIFA warns Brazil again over World Cup preparations

BRASILIA (AFP) - FIFA's general secretary Jerome Valcke warned Brazil anew Tuesday that it was running behind schedule in organizing the 2014 World Cup and urged it to speed up construction work.

"Travelling in Brazil is not easy. To drive in Sao Paulo, to go from one end to the other is a nightmare. To leave the airport takes half a day, this cannot happen (during the tournament)," he added.

He urged authorities to redouble efforts to accelerate construction work so as to be able to welcome the hundreds of thousands of tourists that will flock to Brazil for the World Cup.

FIFA has constantly expressed concern over progress being made at the country's 12 World Cup venues.

In mid-September, the Brazilian government gave assurances that the arenas were on schedule in construction or renovation and will be ready by December 2012.

But the government also admitted that work had not

started in five of 13 airports which will welcome millions of tourists.

Brazil, which will also host the 2016 summer Olympics, needs to spend more than \$11.4 billion to improve roads, boost security and the country's telecommunications infrastructure, according to a study by the Getulio Vargas foundation and Ernst & Young consultants.

Valcke said the FIFA Confederations Cup, which will be held in Brazil in 2013, "will be without any doubt a key test for us, but it will be rather late to make fundamental changes. So it is important to accelerate the work now."

And he conceded that FIFA was not keen on Brazil's plans to charge cheaper World Cup ticket prices for Brazilians over the age of 60 and students.

Valcke said FIFA, keen to

prevent sales of tickets on the black market, accepts half price for seniors, but proposes a minimum entrance fee of 25 dollars for students.

Discount tickets represent 10 percent of total tickets for the World Cup in a country where the minimum monthly wage is \$314 dollars (240 dollars).

Now a deputy representing the Brazilian socialist party, Romario, who was a member of the Brazilian squad that won the 1994 World Cup, said he wanted to prevent "FIFA from creating a state within the state." And he pointed to the corruption allegations swirling around FIFA.

FIFA hopes to reach an agreement on the Brazilian legislation on the World Cup ahead of a meeting between FIFA chief Sepp Blatter and Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff later this month.

Djokovic faces \$1.6 million Paris dilemma

PARIS (AFP) - Injured Novak Djokovic stands to lose \$1.6 million in ATP bonus pool money if he fails to play at this week's Paris Masters.

The top seed has until his opening match today against Croatian Ivan Dodig, a 4-6, 6-1, 6-3 first-round winner over Fabio Fognini, to decide if fitness or finances will prevail.

But fellow multi-millionaire and fourth-ranked rival Roger Federer hinted on Tuesday that the potential massive loss of income might actually mean little in the grand scheme to the most successful player of the season.

"It's a good problem to have, right, he's already made 10 million bucks (on court) this year," said Federer, whose own earnings in what for him is a modest season total \$3.8

million and counting from prize money.

"Is money everything? Clearly not. Clearly helps, but I think he's made so much this year it shouldn't matter."

Djokovic, is facing a shoulder injury dilemma after losing only his fourth match of 2011 in last weekend's Basel semi-finals to Kei Nishikori.

As the world number one, the Serb is entitled to \$2 million from year-end bonus pool monies. But he has already lost \$400,000 of that amount by failing to play Shanghai - back injury - one of eight obligatory Masters 1000 events for top players.

And, under the rules, should he miss Paris - his second Masters absence - his \$1.6 million would shrink to nil.

Refreshed Federer out to end Paris Masters jinx



PARIS (AFP) - Former world number one Roger Federer said on Tuesday he was delighted to have refreshed the batteries with a six week break from tennis as he prepared to launch another assault at winning the Paris Masters for the first time.

The 30-year-old Swiss, who plays unheralded Frenchman Adrian Mannarino in the second round having like the other seeds had a bye for the first round, warmed up for the tournament with his fifth Basel title win last Sunday.

He said he didn't feel any additional pressure because he had yet to win the Masters event here.

"It's just the normal nervousness before a first round," said the third seed, who had until Basel been undergoing

his lengthiest title drought since 2002.

The 30-year-old - who prior to Basel had only won the Qatar title back in January - showed few signs of rustiness last week after his lengthy rest.

He took it after helping Switzerland beat Australia in September's Davis Cup clash as his body started to show signs of wear and tear.

"I had a problem with my wrist, I hurt myself playing against (Jo-Wilfried) Tsonga (US Open quarter-finals), and in Australia (Davis Cup) also I hurt myself."

The 16-time Grand Slam champion said that careful planning will also dictate his 2012 schedule in a year packed with the usual tennis plus the London Olympics.

"I've already said yes for Qatar (early January) and Rotterdam (mid-February)," said Federer.

"I'm talking with Dubai to see whether I'm going to play there as well, and then there will be Davis Cup (against the US in Switzerland on clay)."

He has yet to officially commit to the Davis Cup tie but appears to be leaning towards playing in the match, which runs from February 10-12.

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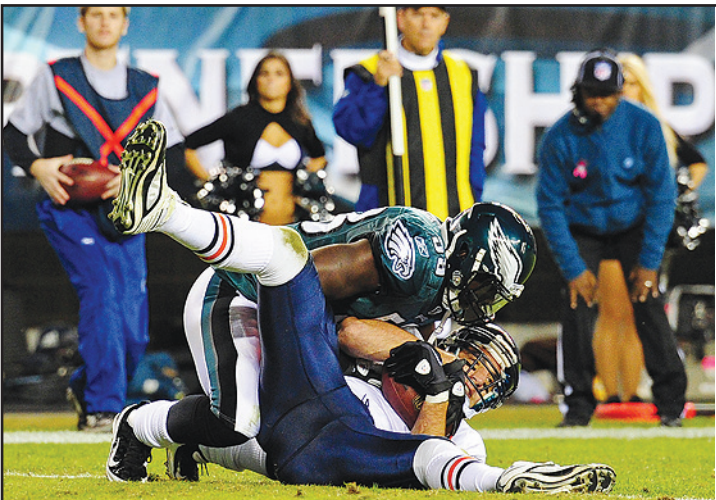
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Cutler's Bears rally...

continued from page 16



Matt Spaeth #89 of the Chicago Bears makes a catch for a touchdown against Brian Rolle #59 of the Philadelphia Eagles on November 7, 2011 in Philadelphia.

Matt Forte ran for 133 yards and bounced back from two costly turnovers as the Bears improved to 5-3 on the season.

Cutler threw a go-ahead five-yard touchdown pass to Bennett early in the fourth for the Bears who extended their winning streak to three games.

Cutler completed 18-of-32 passes for 208 yards during the roller-coaster battle. Bennett, who had missed the previous five games with a chest injury, caught five passes for 95 yards.

In a matchup featuring two of the NFL's best running backs, Forte outplayed the Eagles LeSean McCoy except for the two fumbles. McCoy finished with 71 yards rushing.

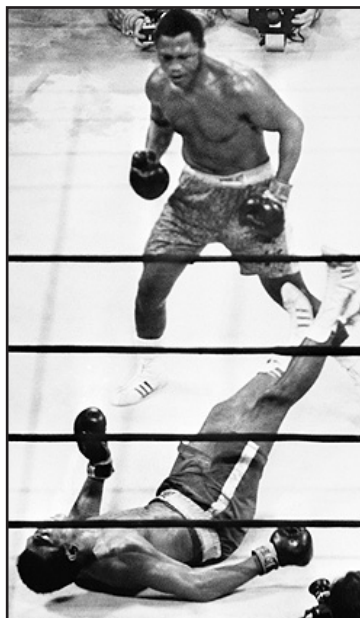
The defending NFC East champion Eagles trail the New York Giants (6-2) by three games.

The Bears entered the game as eight-point underdogs despite coming off a bye last week.

Chicago are third in the NFC North behind undefeated Green Bay (8-0) and Detroit (6-2).

Joe Frazier loses.....

continues from page 16



A picture taken on March 8, 1971 shows US heavyweight boxing champion Joe Frazier (background) keeping his title at the end of the fight called the "match of the century" against his compatriot Muhammad Ali.

AFP PHOTO / FILES

Ali won a unanimous 12-round decision in a 1974 rematch at the Garden and famously completed the trilogy, winning the "Thrilla in Manila" in 1975 by stopping Frazier after 14 rounds in their epic fight in the Philippines.

Frazier's trainer Eddie Futch stepped in to halt the brutal slugfest after the 14th round. Futch had to hold back

Frazier who could barely stand but wanted to continue the fight into the 15th round.

Closest thing to dying that I know of," said Ali after the fight.

For many years after they finished fighting each other in the ring, Frazier remained bitter towards Ali because of Ali's repeated taunts and verbal jabs.

Ali would often use the words Uncle Tom and gorilla to describe Frazier, but Frazier always tried to take the high road and more recently said he had forgiven Ali.

Frazier won the World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association heavyweight titles in 1970 by stopping Jimmy Ellis in the fifth round of their fight at Madison Square Garden.

He defended the title four times before running into the bigger and stronger Foreman in 1973.

Not as well known as the Ali clashes, but almost as dynamic, were Frazier's two lopsided fights against Foreman.

Frazier began his career with 29 consecutive wins before suffering his first loss, and losing his heavyweight title, when he was knocked down six times in two rounds by Foreman in 1973 in Kingston, Jamaica.

The two fought for the second time in 1976, with Foreman hitting Frazier so hard with one left hook that he lifted Frazier right off his feet. The fight was stopped in the fifth after a second knock-down.

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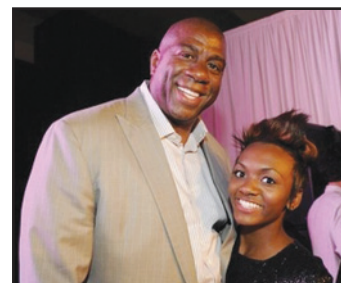
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Magic Johnson does not regret retiring from NBA



Magic Johnson and daughter Elisa in L.A. on Sept. 8.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Magic Johnson says he may have pulled the plug prematurely on his all-star NBA career after being diagnosed with the HIV virus but he has no regrets about leaving the sport when he did.

"At that time, it was the right decision," the former Los Angeles Laker Johnson said Monday on the 20th anniversary of his retirement. "If I knew what I knew today, that I could still play basketball and do my thing, I probably wouldn't have retired."

The three-time NBA MVP

Johnson was honoured at a luncheon Monday at Staples Center arena which was attended by former Laker greats like Michael Cooper and James Worthy, hall-of-famer Jerry West, politicians and celebrities.

Johnson has been an advocate for HIV/AIDS awareness and testing since his retirement and his foundation also announced Monday a \$1 million gift to continue its work towards battling the disease.

Johnson shocked the NBA community when he announced at age 32 he had the virus. Johnson's doctors now say at age 52 he's managing the disease with a daily regime of exercise and drug treatment.

Johnson is a 12-time NBA all-star who appeared in nine NBA finals. He is the NBA's all-time leader in assists per game, with an average of 11.2. He also won a gold medal with the United States team at the 1992 Olympics.

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'Smokin' Joe Frazier loses fight with cancer



PHILADELPHIA (AFP) - Joe Frazier, the former undisputed heavyweight champ famed for his epic fights against Muhammad Ali, died on Monday after a brief but brave battle with liver cancer. He was 67.

The boxing icon won an Olympic gold medal at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics to launch a brilliant career that spanned almost 20 years but he was best known for fighting Ali in a famed 1970s trilogy of bouts, including the epic "Thrilla in Manila."

He had been under home care after being diagnosed a couple of weeks ago with the advanced liver cancer that took his life, a family friend said.

Frazier, nicknamed "Smokin' Joe," captured two major heavyweight titles while taking on all comers, including Ali, George Foreman, Jerry Quarry, Joe Bugner,

Oscar Bonavena and George Chuvalo.

Frazier was a huge part of the heyday of boxing's heavy-weight division in the 1970s. He finished his storied career with 32 wins (27 knockouts), four losses and one draw.

His four losses came at the hands of just two other legendary fighters from that era: Ali and Foreman.

Multiple world champion Manny Pacquiao heard the news after arriving Monday night in Las Vegas for his title fight against Juan Manuel Marquez on Saturday.

"Boxing lost a great champion, and the sport lost a great ambassador," Pacquiao said. "My prayers go out to his family."

British former world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis said Frazier was "one of the best".

Foreman bid farewell to his old rival in a Twitter message: "Good night Joe Frazier. I love you dear friend."

Current world heavyweight boxing champions, the Klitschko brothers, Vitali and Wladimir from Ukraine, also had praise for the fallen legend. "My brother and I are very sad about the death of Joe Frazier," said Vitali.

Frazier was the first man to defeat Ali, with a unanimous 15-round decision in 1971 at Madison Square Garden, in a bout dubbed the "Fight of the Century" that was watched by an estimated TV audience of 300 million.

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NFL: Cutler's Bears rally past Eagles



McCoy #25 of the Philadelphia Eagles is tackled by Lance Briggs #55, Charles Tillman #33, and Nick Roach #53 of the Chicago Bears at Lincoln Financial Field on November 7, 2011 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. S

PHILADELPHIA (AFP) - Jay Cutler threw for two touchdowns, including the eventual

winning score to Earl Bennett in the final quarter to lift the Chicago Bears to a 30-24 win

over Philadelphia on Monday.

continues on page 15

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